

Superior Court Highlights

Overall Court Activity

- From 2004 to 2005, superior court case filings increased by 0.6% (1,787 filings), resolutions increased by 1.1% (3,315 resolutions), and completions increased by 1.6% (4,512 completions). Across the same period, trial proceedings increased by 1.8% (144 proceedings), and non-trial proceedings increased by 5.6% (40,554 proceedings).
- Across case types, the largest percentage increases from 2004 to 2005 occurred in juvenile dependency filings (7.9%, or 1,691 filings) and criminal filings (5.2%, or 2,482 filings).
- The largest percentage decreases occurred in juvenile offender filings (8.4%, or 2,119 filings) and guardianship filings (2.7%, or 67 filings).
- As in prior years, civil cases were the largest single category of filings, accounting for about 4 out of every 10 case filings (42.3%), case resolutions (43.5%), and case completions (43.7%). In contrast, civil trial proceedings accounted for about 1 out of every 5 trial proceedings (18.6%), and civil non-trial proceedings were fewer than 1 out of every 13 non-trial proceedings.

Criminal Activity

- From 2004 to 2005, criminal filings increased by 5.2% (2,482 filings).
- From 2004 to 2005, the greatest percentage increase in criminal filings—39.7% (712 filings)—occurred with sex crimes.
- In terms of number of filings, theft/burglary filings increased the most, by 1,361 (11.8%).
- Homicide filings increased by 11.7% (35 filings) from 2004 to 2005.
- Of the 8 types of felony filings, only robbery filings decreased (by 2.1%, or 30 cases) from 2004 to 2005.
- In 2005, the combined violent offense-related filings for homicide, sex crimes, assault, and robbery accounted for about 1 out of every 5 criminal filings.
- Pre-resolution hearings were 54.1% and post-resolution hearings (sentencing hearings, review hearings, and post-resolution hearings), were 32.6% of all criminal proceedings. In contrast, jury trials were 0.5% and non-jury trials were 0.2% of all criminal proceedings.

Civil Activity

- The yearly number of civil case filings in 2005 (127,808) was almost equal to the numbers in 2003 and 2004, down just 0.2% from the 2004 level.
- The largest changes in the number of civil filings occurred in “other matters filed with the clerk” and commercial filings. An increase of 4.2% (1,639 filings) in “other matters filed with the clerk” was offset by a decline of 7.2% (1,703 filings) in commercial filings.
- The number of civil case resolutions increased by 2.2% over the 2004 figure. The “uncontested/resolved when filed” segment of resolution

accounted for 41.7% of all civil cases resolved in 2005. About 1 out of every 10 civil resolutions in 2005 came as the result of trial activity, although the number of post-trial resolutions increased from 1,179 in 2004 to 1,232 in 2005, a 4.5% change.

Domestic Activity

- From 2004 to 2005, domestic relations case filings increased by 0.9% (345 filings).
- The largest increases in the number of domestic filings occurred in “miscellaneous domestic” filings (an increase of 397 cases or 15.2%), child custody (an increase of 203 cases or 11.6%).
- The largest decreases in the number of domestic filings occurred in dissolutions with children (a decrease of 108 cases, or 0.8%), and dissolutions without children (a decrease of 97 cases, or 0.6%)
- The numbers of resolutions (up by 1.3%) and proceedings (up by 3.0%) were both greater in 2005 than 2004.

Juvenile Offender Activity

- Total juvenile felony filings were nearly unchanged from 2004 to 2005, but there were large percentage increases of 28.6% in robbery filings, 10.3% in motor vehicle theft filings, and 23.0% in controlled substance filings. These and other felony filing increases were offset by a 9.5% decrease in theft/burglary filings.
- Total juvenile offender filings decreased substantially, by over 2,000 cases (or 8.4%), because misdemeanor and non-charge filings were both lower in 2005 than 2004.
- From 2004 to 2005, fewer cases were resolved, fewer proceedings were held, and fewer sentences were handed down. In contrast to these general trends, in 2005 the number of community supervision sentences was 8.3% (or 219 sentences) greater than in 2004.